

5 End-time: Angels of Mercy



start

FROM CORNFIELD TO PULPIT

(What connection do you think the following illustration has with the Bible texts on the other page?)

"What shall I do?" the Low Hampton, New York farmer puzzled.

No matter what he did lately, he could get no peace. Sleep lost its restfulness and work its meaning. Wherever he turned, a gentle but firm voice seemed to say, "You must tell the world of its danger!"

"I'm not a preacher," he countered, unhitching horses from a plow and standing still in the August sun that day in 1831. "I'm slow of speech and haven't got much learning," he argued, as though someone were beside him. "I'm not right for the job!"

"The job" involved the farmer's Bible studies. That was strange, for earlier in his life he had rejected the Bible's divine inspiration. He had also claimed that God was no longer involved in the world's affairs, having left it to run by nature's laws after He created it.

But that all changed after the War of 1812. Miller couldn't understand how he and the other American soldiers were able to defeat a well-trained British force that outnumbered them by three to one.

Turning to the Bible, he found the answer to more than this question. He discovered that the Bible was divinely inspired. It led him to accept Jesus as his Savior and join the local Baptist church, where he sometimes read printed sermons when the minister was absent.

Then, by 1818, his years of Bible study led him to a shocking discovery: Jesus would come around 1843 and destroy the world! *It needs to be warned*, he thought. But he was sure he wasn't the person for this task, although he shared his views with a few Low Hampton residents.

As 1843 drew nearer and the almost audible voice encouraged him to preach, he began to reconsider. "I know what I'll do," he now said, walking toward some trees. "I'll pray about it." Kneeling on the rocky earth, he promised, "Lord, if You've been telling me to preach, I'll do it if I get an invitation to do so." Relieved, he arose, thinking, *It'll never happen, since I'm not a preacher!*

Half an hour later, his nephew came, asking him to preach on Sunday in nearby Dresden because the minister would be absent!

He angrily headed for the trees. He didn't want to preach! Patiently, God listened to his objections but didn't remove the conviction.

With fear, William went to Dresden. But the congregation greatly appreciated his message. In fact, they asked him to preach for the entire week, and a revival (renewed religious interest) resulted! When the new preacher returned home, he found written invitations asking him to present his views about Christ's coming to other congregations!

Clearly, God's hand was in the matter! The former farmer, William Miller, took courage and started a career that would prepare thousands for Christ's return, both in his time and ours.



Key Text: Choose one of the texts from Wednesday's portion of the lesson. Write it here and memorize it this week.

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Sunday HERE'S WHAT I THINK

>> Mr. Runako teaches school on a tiny Indonesian island. One day he rushes into the village, warning that a typhoon will hit the island within 24 hours. He begs everyone to leave for the mainland immediately. Most villagers refuse, saying they'll ride out this typhoon like any other. Nothing he says can budge them. Tearfully, he piles his family into a small boat, departing promptly for the mainland. Some families, skeptical about the storm's arrival, leisurely cram their boats with possessions, but a monster typhoon surprises them, destroying much property and many lives.

>> How does this scenario reflect our stormy times? Why didn't Mr. Runako force the villagers to leave? How much are we responsible for others' lives, if at all? How far should we go in warning others of danger?

>> Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your responses. Be upfront and honest. Say what you think.

Monday WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?

Different people, different opinions. Some of the quotations below represent the views of true kingdom citizens; others may not. Can you tell the difference? How do these statements compare with what God is saying in His Word? After reviewing the texts in the God Says . . . portion of the lesson, write a statement that captures your belief. Be prepared to quote yourself at Sabbath School.

>> "Among the attributes of God, although they are all equal, mercy shines with even more brilliancy than justice."—Miguel de Cervantes, 16th-century Spanish novelist and dramatist.

>> "Let justice be done though the heavens fall."—Roman maxim.

>> "The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about them."—Albert Einstein (1879-1955), German-born U.S. scientist.

>> "If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this."—C. S. Lewis, 20th-century English author.

>> "Like the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, the Advent movement appeared in the different countries of Christendom at the same time. In both Europe and America men of faith and prayer were led to the study of the prophecies, and, tracing down the inspired record, they saw convincing evidence that the end of all things was at hand. In different lands there were isolated bodies of Christians who, solely by the study of the Scriptures, arrived at the belief that the Saviour's advent was near."—Ellen G. White, 19th-century inspired author and church cofounder.

Write your own quotation.
What I say is . . .

>>

3

Tuesday
SO WHAT?

- >> Like a foundation is to a building, so are the three angels' messages in **Revelation 14:6-12** to the Seventh-day Adventist church. The unique beliefs we have as a church are all related to these messages from God.
- >> In the first angel's warning that "the hour of [God's] judgment has come," we see the Adventist emphasis on people's accountability to God for their actions and on the judgment as a present reality, not just a far-away event. Also, with the proclamation "Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water" (NIV), we understand that we are to worship the God of creation (not evolution), who asked us to worship Him on the seventh day in memory of His creation.
- >> The second message refers to our ongoing commitment to biblical truth and our role as a haven for those looking for a church in which biblical truth is not ignored.
- >> The third angel's message reminds us of our commitment to God's kingdom and heavenly values and our rejection of Satan's kingdom and earthly values.
- >> As God's agents, our assignment is to help Him rescue as many people as possible from the eternal death prepared for Satan and his kingdom.

5

Thursday
WHAT DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

- >> The three angels' messages portray a war between two kingdoms, each competing for our allegiance. The first angel addresses people living at a time of great invention and progress.
- >> The self-sufficient people to whom the angel gives his message don't pay any attention. However, God fights back, for He sends another angel, inviting people who really want to follow truth to leave the organizations that have chosen to be deceived by Satan.
- >> Reluctant to have them blindly follow Satan, not realizing the consequences of their actions, He sends a final angel to warn them of the terrible punishment they are choosing by allowing Satan to stamp them as his own.
- >> The choice for each individual is this: Will I choose God or Satan, life or death?

4

Wednesday
GOD SAYS . . .

- >> **2 Corinthians 5:17, 18 (NIV)**
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."
 - >> **Revelation 1:1 (NIV)**
"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John."
 - >> **Hebrews 1:14 (NIV)**
"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"
 - >> **2 Corinthians 6:17, 18 (NIV)**
" 'Therefore come out from them and be separate,' says the Lord. 'Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty."
 - >> **Joel 2:1 (KJV)**
"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand."
 - >> **Daniel 7:9, 10 (KJV)**
"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."
 - >> **Revelation 20:12 (KJV)**
"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
- AND . . .
- >> **The Great Controversy, p. 36.**
"God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression [sin]; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown."
 - >> (More: Matthew 12:36, 37; John 5:22; Acts 24:25; Romans 3:23; Romans 14:10; Ephesians 5:25-27; Colossians 1:12-14; 1 Peter 4:17.)

6

Friday
HOW DOES IT WORK?

- >> Sometimes earliteens are tempted to think that God and religion are for older people, not them. They claim that they will give their hearts to God after they get older.
- >> Match the people in the left columns with their ages in the right column. After you have matched them, record your feelings in a journal entry.

PERSON EXPERIENCING EVENT

PERSON'S AGE
AT TIME OF EVENT*

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1. Jesus began His ministry by tactfully teaching Jewish leaders in the Temple. ____ | 6. Good King Joash was proclaimed king at this age. ____ | a. 19 |
| 2. At this age, the missionary J. N. Andrews' daughter, Mary, was speaking French like a French girl and proofreading French publications. ____ | 7. Future conference president, missionary, and teacher Stephen N. Haskell started preaching at this age. ____ | b. 24 |
| 3. Pioneer Adventist educator Goodloe Harper Bell started teaching at this age. ____ | 8. Already a physician by this age, J. H. Kellogg became director of Battle Creek's Health Reform Institute. ____ | c. 17 |
| 4. At this age, O. A. Olsen, a future General Conference president, was baptized. ____ | 9. Luther Warren was this age when he helped to found the first Seventh-day Adventist Society at his home church. ____ | d. 7 |
| 5. God called Ellen Harmon (White) to be His messenger, giving her the first of many visions. ____ | 10. G. W. Amadon worked at the Review and Herald publishing group for 50 years, starting at this age. ____ | e. 16 |
| | | f. 12 |
| | | g. 13 |
| | | h. 21 |
| | | i. 20 |
| | | j. 14 |
- (4) 01 '(1) 6 '(b) 8 '(1) 7 '(d) 9 '(c) 5 '(g) 4 '(a) 3 '(e) 2 '(f) 1